



## Unauthorized trails and strategic planning

A major issue on public lands is the thousands of miles of trails built by users without authorization from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. Many of these trails pose significant threats to the environment and public safety. DNR acknowledges that some of these trails could possibly be incorporated into the landscape of public lands. However, for this to happen, DNR must have adequate funding to maintain these trails and provide the law enforcement presence to protect public safety.

DNR may consider incorporating unauthorized trails into a landscape through either a **detailed strategic planning process** or on a **short-term, case-by-case basis**, depending on the extent of environmental impact and public safety issues.

- **Addressing Unauthorized Trails Through Detailed Strategic Planning**

Priority for this kind of extensive planning will be placed on those areas where impacts to the environment and public safety require an in-depth solution on a broader landscape level.

When conducting this kind of detailed planning, DNR will:

- Explain how recreation and trails impact the landscape's environment, including soils, water quality, habitat for fish and other wildlife, and noise.
- Explain how restoration, correction, and/or prevention will be incorporated into the process to address environmental impacts.
- Specify if it is deferring to or incorporating adequate pre-existing statutes or regulations (e.g. Ecology noise rules).
- Consider the level of safety, liability, or problems with and interactions amongst users.

- **Addressing Unauthorized Trails on a Short-Term, Case-By-Case Basis**

DNR may determine that unauthorized trails can be addressed on a case-by-case basis, without a strategic plan, using education; redirecting or limiting use; closing areas, undesignated trails, or facilities; and/or providing enforcement.

In carrying out both of these approaches, DNR will, to the extent feasible, work collaboratively and coordinate with the public, neighboring land owners (private and public), user groups, governments and agencies, and other organizations. DNR will also pursue the possibility of grant funding, partnerships, and other sources of funding to develop and implement planning and other strategies.